

TREASURY DEPARTMENT

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Treasury Secretary Douglas Dillon said today that the Annual Assay Commission for 1961 will convene at the United States Mint in Philadelphia on Wednesday morning, February 8, 1961, for the traditional "trial of the coins." The White House Saturday announced the names of the 15 members appointed by President Kennedy to take part in the tests.

The Assay Commission is one of the oldest institutions of the Government, having been provided for in the same statute that established the Mint on April 2, 1792, and assembled regularly since that time. Its function is to make tests of coins, taken at random from the two operating mints during the preceding year, to determine whether they conform in weight and fineness to legal requirements.

During each year one silver coin from every delivery of 10,000 made at each of the two mints is taken out for test by the Commission. These coins are carefully preserved in a "pyx" at the Philadelphia Mint, under the joint care of the Superintendent and Assayer, and are delivered to the Commission for the annual tests. The word "pyx," referred to in the law authorizing the "trial of the coins," derives from the "pyx-chest," a receptacle for coins selected for testing in the early days of the British Mint.

Mr. Edward Wichers, Associate Director of the National Bureau of Standards, one of the members of the Commission, will take to Philadelphia the official weights of the Philadelphia Mint, which have been calibrated at the Bureau of Standards. These weights will be used in the annual tests.

Besides Dr. Wichers, those serving on the Assay Commission this year are:

Mr. Chester L. Krause, of Iola, Wisconsin
Floyd W. Shafer, M. D., of Stroudsburg, Pennsylvania
Mr. August John Throm, of Paterson, New Jersey
Mr. Jack T. Conn, of Ada, Oklahoma
Mr. Randolph W. Nuckols, of Richmond, Virginia
Mr. Albert Gallatin Myers, Sr., of Gastonia, North Carolina
Mr. C. A. Seiple, of Canton, Ohio
Mr. John E. Power, of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Mr. Walter H. Woodson, Sr., of Salisbury, North Carolina
Mr. Archie Kimbrough Davis, of Winston-Salem, North Carolina
Mr. Kenneth Stanley Adams, of Bartlesville, Oklahoma
Mr. Harry O. Nichols, of Norfolk, Virginia
Mr. Howell R. Hensley, of Fort Thomas, Kentucky
Mr. John H. Morris, Jr., of Homewood, Alabama

Other members of the Commission, named in conformity with statutory provisions, are Honorable Ray M. Gidney, Comptroller of the Currency, Washington, D. C.; Honorable J. Cullen Ganey, Judge of the District Court, Eastern District of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; and Mr. Howard F. Johnson, Chief Assayer of the U. S. Assay Office, New York, New York.

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